

Long-toed Stint *Calidris subminuta* (Middendorff, 1853) from Kole wetlands, Thrissur-First photographic record from Kerala, South India

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As a part of monitoring the trends in bird movements, in accordance with the agricultural practices in Kole wetlands, Thrissur district, periodic surveys were conducted from the year 2008 to 2011. On 1 October 2008, while doing a point count, the authors came across a flock of waders at Adat Kolefield (10°32'01.33"N, 76°09'42.23"E). The locality is a part of Vemband-Kole Ramsar site and well known for its bird life and brackish water paddy practices (Shivaperuman and Jayson, 2000). The rice field was waterlogged and the annual water draining for the year's rice cultivation was also happening. The mixed flock of waders consisted of mainly of Greater Sand Plovers (*Charadrius leschenaultii*), Lesser Sand Plovers (*Charadrius mongolus*), and Stints (*Calidris* sp.). Among these, 17 birds were found different of which one bird was photographed. Later with the help of field guides (Rasmussen and Anderton, 2005, Grimmet *et.al.*, 1998) the bird was identified as Long-toed Stint (*Calidris subminuta*). The observed individual had prominent streaks on the sides of the breast with blackish bill, a distinct whitish supercilium and relatively long yellowish green legs (Fig. 1). Long neck with an upright posture unlike the other stints (Fig. 2) further confirmed the identity of species. The same flock probably, with 14 Long-toed Stints was again sighted the very next day from the same field.

Four species of Stints (*Calidris* sp.), one of the small waders, are known to winter in India viz. Little Stint, *Calidris minuta*, Rufous-necked Stint, *C. ruficollis*, Temminck's Stint, *C. temminckii* and Long-toed Stint, *C. subminuta*. Of these, Long-toed Stint is a winter visitor to the east coast, Gujarat and eastern India (Ali and Ripley, 1983, Kumar *et al.*, 2005). A few specimens were also collected from Bihar (George, 1962) and in Gulf of Mannar National Park, Tamil Nadu (Balachandran, 1995). Presumably, the present report forms the first photographic record of this rare winter visitor from Kerala. Earlier there were two records of this bird from Kerala. One was report of a single bird among a group of other waders at Vembanad Lake, Kottayam district in January 2007 (Sathyan and Tim Inskipp as cited in Sashikumar *et al.* 2011) and the other of a single bird from Maranchery Kole fields, Kunnankulam, Thrissur district Kerala (Ravindran P K. Pers.comm., September 2012).

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Fig. : Photographs of Long- Toed Stint from Kole wetlands of Thrissur